

Newsletter of the
Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

July - August 2012

**Save the Date! Fall Wildflower Festival
- Saturday, October 27, 2012!**

Butterfly tent, wildflowers for sale, wildflower hunt, beehive exhibit, wildflower presentations, and more! Volunteers will be needed for this one-day fun and educational event!

Chairman's Message

By: Barb Hoffman

The Wheels are Turning.....Bicycle wheels, that is. The Friends have joined the Tri-County Trail Task Force (the name may change) composed of interested citizens and staff from Pasco, Hillsborough, and Pinellas Counties to plan and find funding for a regional paved trail network that will link all three counties. The network potentially will include a link from the current Pinellas Trail to the entrance of the Preserve, and this is the sole reason why the Friends are involved in this Task Force. This trail linkage has been part of Pinellas County's future land-use maps for many years, but the project gets bumped for budgetary priority decisions. The Task Force provides a common ground to share ideas and build regional relationships. Our first meeting was held at Brooker Creek Environmental Education Center which may become the future meeting place as well because of its central location to all counties.

The wheels are turning in our Gift Shop as well! As we look forward to the date when we move into the former gift shop location, we will need to fill several time slots for gift shop volunteers. It's very easy duty! In fact, you can catch up

Chairman's Message

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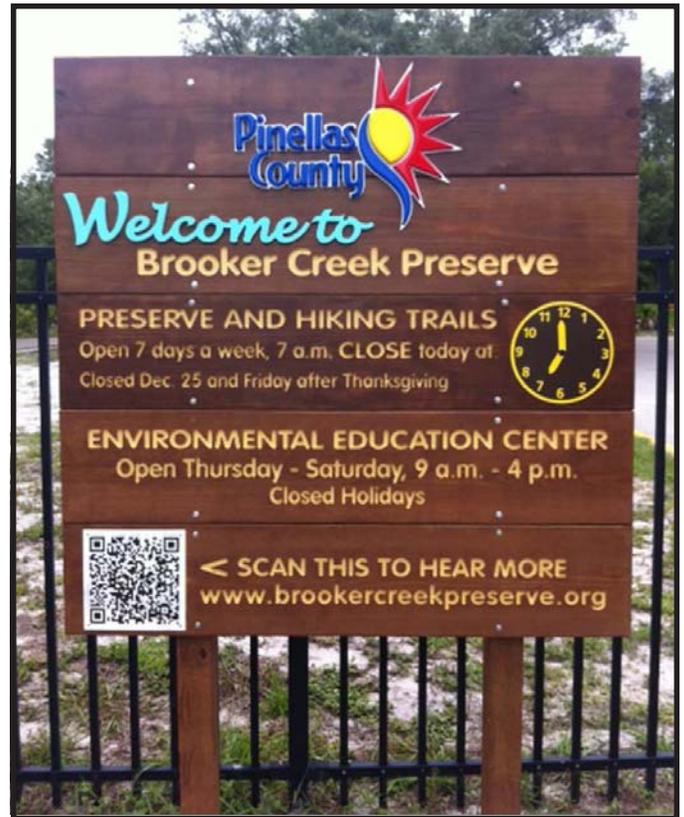
on your reading or work on your sudoku or whatever you like to do for quiet time. We so appreciate the Friends members who have signed on for 4 hours a month, but we need more! I personally have signed up for the second Saturday afternoon slot from 12-4. Can we count on you? If so, please email or call us - THANK YOU!

We wish the wheels were turning in this case because we STILL NEED A GOLF CART!!!!!! If you have a new or gently used cart that you would like to donate (100% tax deductible), please, please, please feel free to do so! We will put it to VERY good use! If a business would like to donate one, we will consider advertising that business on the cart or recognize it in some other significant way. Spread the word! Tell your friends! We really need it!!

Barb

Brooker Creek Preserve getting new signs!

The first of nine new signs was put into place in May, and what a beautiful thing it is! This sign replaces the outdated sign at the Preserve entry and more clearly provides information on days and times the Preserve is open. Additionally, it is made of wood which is more in character with the natural environment of the Preserve. The new signage comes thanks to Paul Cozzie, Director of Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources, and staff in Pinellas County Communications - Kathy Swain, Mary Burrell, and Debra Landsdowne. Friends members, Cathie Foster and Barb Hoffman, provided lots of input on where signs should go and what they should say. As County funds become available, the remaining eight new signs will be constructed and placed. This signage project is one very good example of the Friends and County staff working together for a common goal - the health and welfare of the Preserve.



Friends Vice Chair, Cathie Foster, receives a \$1,000 check from East Lake Sunrise Rotary Club

A Nice Gift from East Lake Sunrise Rotary Club!

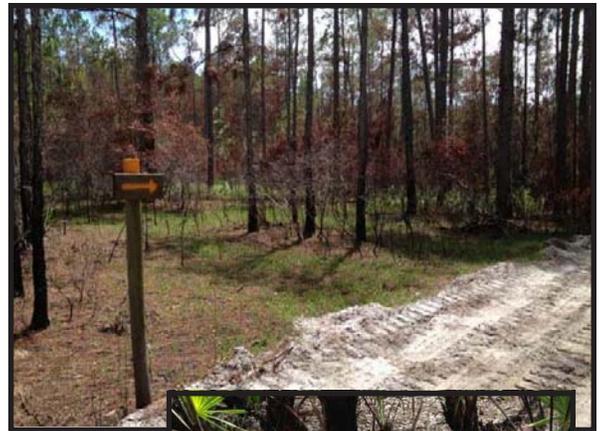
Many thanks to East Lake Sunrise Rotary Club for the very generous \$1,000 grant to be used to purchase items for the gift shop. The Friends applied for a grant last year to help defray the costs of opening the gift shop and were grateful to be chosen as an award recipient. All proceeds from the gift shop are used for programs, events, volunteer needs, and gift shop stock. In other words, all money stays within the Preserve and is used for the Preserve. Thank you, Rotary, for helping the Friends achieve our goals!

Brooker Creek Wildfires

By Lara Miller, Pinellas County Extension, University of Florida/IFAS

On Friday May 25, 2012 two wildfires occurred in the Preserve. One of the fires occurred where the Wilderness Trail intersects with the Blackwater Cutoff Trail and burned approximately 20 acres. The other fire burned between three and four acres west of the trail system. The cause of these fires was lightning and the larger of the two fires was reported by a visitor to the Education Center when they reported seeing smoke on the trail. The Florida Division of Forestry was called in to investigate and local fire departments were called in later for backup. After the creation and expansion of multiple firebreaks, the fire was contained by Saturday. The County's Wildland Fire Team, directed by the Parks and Conservation Resource Department, followed up later to ensure the fire was completely out.

Pictures on the left are from May 31, 2012 and the pictures on the right show the rapid recovery of this area as of June 21, just twenty-one days later.



Position Announcement - Brooker Creek Preserve Hike Guide/Nature Interpreter

We need your assistance! The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve intends to hire a person to serve as a hike guide/nature interpreter sometime in the next several months. The primary duties of the successful candidate will be to schedule and lead hikes at Brooker Creek Preserve for school groups, interpret the natural history and ecology of the Preserve, and serve as an ambassador for the overall Preserve program. This will be a paid position, starting at a base salary and with financial incentives to grow the program over time. Currently, we anticipate that the position will require a minimum of 2 programs per week, but the potential for growth is great and could include programs for other-aged groups and organizations. The successful candidate must have strong skills and experience working with school-aged youth, good knowledge of the ecology of Brooker Creek Preserve's natural communities, and the energy and enthusiasm needed to organize and build the program to excellence. This is an exciting new step for the Friends and we need all of you to get the word out to anyone you feel might be interested. A more formal job description with salary details will be developed shortly and widely circulated. Please send inquiries to fobcp@tampabay.rr.com

We Need Your Hours

Every quarter, the County Administration requires staff to submit the total number of volunteer hours performed in support of each program, including those specifically performed at Brooker Creek Preserve. It is expected that the number of volunteer hours will increase over time. While the financial support provided by the Friends of Brooker Creek is critical to the continuation of the Preserve's programs, so too is the volunteer support you provide. For those of you that are registered volunteers with the County and can log your hours in the computer at the Preserve, please try to remember to do so. If you are giving time on a day that the Preserve is not open, simply keep track of your hours and you can report them electronically in an e-mail to brookercreek@pinellascounty.org. These hours include everything you all do to help support Brooker Creek Preserve from garden maintenance to board meetings and event preparation to refilling bird feeders. It all counts! All of your contributions add up and go to show how valuable you all are and how invested everyone is in keeping the doors open to the Preserve. Thank you so much for all that you do...let's make sure we show the county how much we are actually doing



A pygmy rattlesnake at Brooker Creek Preserve. Photo by Mike Fisher



Cathie Foster at Brooker Creek Preserve after more than 12 inches of rain fell in late June. Photo by Barb Hoffman.

Bees

By: Craig Huegel

There is no group of insects more important to us than bees. The entire evolution of flowering plants was likely made possible by the convergent evolution of bees - over millions of years. Nearly all of our food products are pollinated by them. From the relatively large bumblebees to the tiny sweat bees, this insect group is everywhere in Florida providing services that are immeasurable to us and to our state's ecology. Bees are by far the best pollinating insect because they collect pollen on purpose to feed their offspring and move it from flower to flower. Butterflies, by contrast, are much less effective in that role because they are only interested in the nectar. They pick up small amounts of pollen inadvertently as they forage. Many bees have specially designed "hairs" on parts of their body and/or pollen "baskets". As they forage for pollen (and nectar), they pack it in these specialized places. But, as they arrive at the next flower to repeat this process, some of the pollen invariably falls out and pollinates the flower.

More than 300 bee species are native to Florida, and a good many of these can be found at Brooker Creek Preserve. Though there has never been a survey to estimate the exact number of bees here, the Preserve's large size and diversity of habitats makes it an ideal place for most species. Honeybees are not native to North America. They were brought here by early British colonists to produce honey. Native bees do not make honey, and very few produce colonies and live in hives. Most native bees live rather solitary lives. Many excavate small underground burrows and some live in hollow stems or holes bored into dead wood. This is an extremely diverse group that fills a great many different ecological roles.

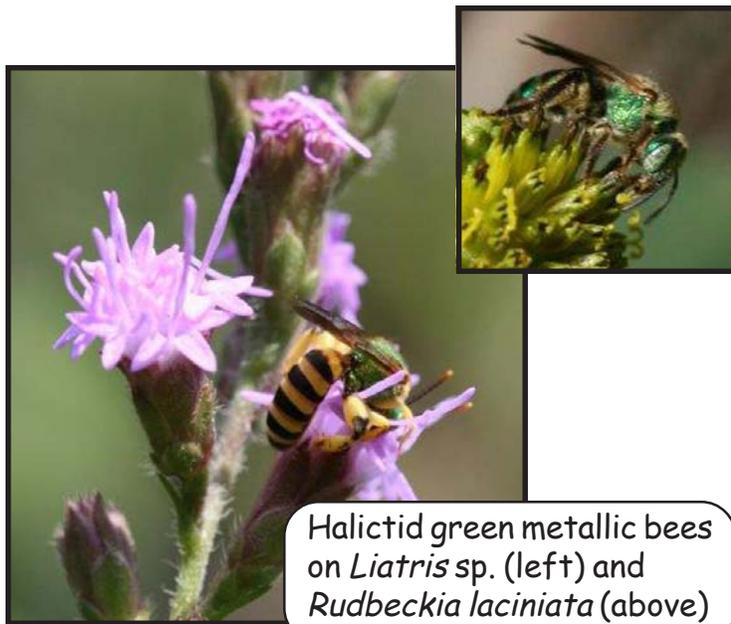
Bees can be divided into seven families worldwide. Six are found in North America, but only five are common here. Within those families are many subfamilies that are relatively easy to distinguish. Most are found in Florida and, specifically at Brooker Creek Preserve. By far, the most diverse



Honey bee on
Calamintha georgiana

subfamily is the Apidae; the one that includes bumblebees and honeybees, but a few other families can be frequently encountered as well. Let's take a cursory look at the major ones. Then, as you explore the Preserve, pay special attention to areas of wildflowers visited by bees and see how many of these you encounter. You may be surprised at how easy it is to differentiate groups of bees and by how many different species you see once you are aware to really look.

Mining bees and plasterer bees are not widely distributed in our part of the world. As their names suggest, they play special roles in the environment. Mining bees are ground nesting bees and can be found mostly on early spring flowering plants and can sometimes be found nesting in aggregations. They require areas of open ground in which to excavate their burrows and in some parts of the world, they are extremely important pollinators of crop plants in open areas - such as the arid Southwest. Plasterer bees are so named because they line their underground chambers with a sort of waterproof plaster to protect their nests and developing young.



Halictid green metallic bees on *Liatris* sp. (left) and *Rudbeckia laciniata* (above)



Halictid sweat bee on *Rudbeckia laciniata*

The **halictid** family of bees is much better represented here and a great many can be seen if you are observant. This family includes the brilliant green metallic bees and the small less-colorful sweat bees. Green metallic bees are just what the name professes. They are shiny green in color. Many have striped lower bodies (abdomens) and some are just metallic green all over. Body size rarely exceeds 1/2 inch. Green metallic bees visit a wide variety of flowers, but because they have relatively short tongues they are not effective pollinators of flowers with deep tubes. Most green metallic bees are solitary and live in underground tunnels that they excavate.

Other types of halictid bees are often called "sweat bees" because they are sometimes attracted to sweat and will drink it for the water and salts it provides. Sweat bees are very small (about 1/3 inch long), rather drab in color and with heads that seem a bit

overly large for their bodies. Sweat bees are a large group and often are significant pollinators. They too excavate underground tunnels and raise their young in them.

Another important group of bees, found throughout our region, is the **leafcutter bees** in the megachilinae. Leafcutter bees are often quite small (about 1/3 inch long), and would go largely unnoticed if it were not for their habit of cutting small half-moon shapes out of the margins of certain types of leaves. This behavior can make them unwanted guests if it occurs in the landscapes of folks that believe the foliage of their plants must remain untouched, but it makes for a fascinating story to those of us who don't. Leafcutter bees take these tiny leaf pieces back to their underground nests where the females shape them to line their brood cells - where their eggs are laid. Leafcutter bees are nearly always solitary and prefer to pollinate the flowers of asters and legumes. They can be told from other bees by their habit of carrying their abdomen upturned when at rest. This is normally yellow in females because they carry pollen on it too.



Leafcutter bee (*Vernonia gigantea*)

Our most-commonly seen bees belong to the **Apidae**. This large group includes the nonnative honeybee, but also the native bumblebees, carpenter bees, and long-horned bees. All of these are relatively robust bees with "hairy" plump bodies.

As a group, bumblebees are the largest in size. They also are the largest in number of species in this region of the world. Not surprisingly then, they also have the largest number of rare and endangered species. Many species of bumblebees are in decline, likely the result of habitat loss and widespread use of pesticides. Bumblebees are colonial nesters, like honeybees, but they build these nests in underground cavities or within crevices of some kind. They often feed their offspring nectar, but they do not store it in large quantities as honeybees do. Bumblebees are hard-working individuals. They are often the first bees to emerge in the spring and one of the last to retire for the winter, and they work a very wide variety of flowers. Their long tongues allow them to pollinate flowers with long tubes.

Carpenter bees are a bit smaller, on average, than bumblebees, but are often colored like them in bands of yellow and black. They are generally gentle animals, but have strong jaws that they sometimes use to chew through the sides of tubular flowers to "rob" the nectar - without pollinating them. These strong jaws are mostly used to construct their nests. Carpenter bees excavate nests in soft (dead) wood and dead plant stems. Though sometimes lumped with termites as destroyers of personal property, carpenter bees do not cause structural damage to wooden buildings IF those buildings are painted or in a good state of repair.

Long-horned bees are so named because their antennae are quite long in comparison to their body size. Long-horned bees are solitary species that build their nests underground. They are aster family specialists and are, therefore, most active in summer and fall when the majority of sunflowers, asters, blazing stars, etc. are in bloom.

Bees are a diverse, interesting, and important group and they make Brooker Creek Preserve a much more productive natural area. As you stop at the wildflower garden at the Education Center or walk the trails, see how many different kinds you encounter. I bet that it's quite a few.

Bumblebee on
Liatris chapmanii



Large Carpenter bee
(*Dalea carnea*)



Long-horned bee
Photo by Christina Evans

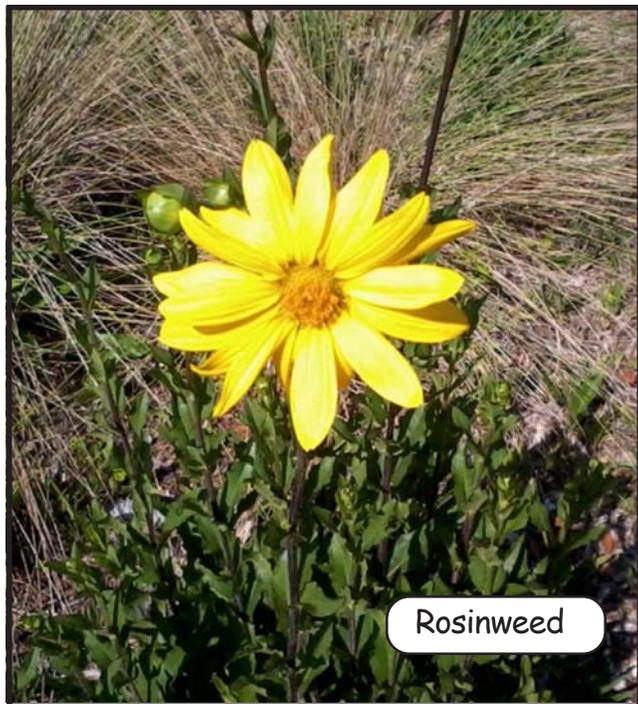


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News from the Wildflower Garden

By: Pam Brown

Thank heaven for some much needed rain. Things are greening up again. The Rosinweed, Gaillardia and Pineland Heliotrope are beginning to bloom and I spotted a couple of Twinflower as well. Barb Hoffman and I worked pruning and generally getting things neater in the garden the last Saturday in May. We also transplanted some of the many Gulf Muhly grass plants to along the sidewalk by the garden. We are looking forward to doing some additional planting once we have reliable rain. Adding more Sunshine mimosa in the grassy area by the garden and beginning our native shrub garden are in the plans for the near future. **Plan to join us on the last Saturday of the month from 8 to 10 a.m.** Remember to bring you own tools and gloves. We will provide water and break-fast snacks.



Rosinweed

Pam's Gardening Tip of the Month

By: Pam Brown

I am not fond of using chemical pesticides. However, I also do not like to see my favorite plants decline due to pests or diseases. The one pesticide that I keep in my garden shed is Neem oil. This is a broad spectrum pesticide that is also a biorational - derived from the Neem tree. Neem oil functions as an insecticide, a fungicide and a miticide. It does not kill immediately; you must give it time to work.

Neem oil has many complex active ingredients. These active ingredients are similar to the hormones that insects produce. Insects feeding on plants take up the Neem oil ingredients just like natural hormones. These hormone-like substances enter the body and block the real hormones from working properly eventually killing the pest. This is especially effective for aphids, mealybugs, white flies, spider mites and thrips. It will also repel grasshoppers, but not kill them. Used as a fungicide, Neem oil works by smothering the fungal spores and is especially good for treating powdery mildew and leaf spots.

As an oil product, it will also smother any insects that it covers. Since beneficial insects do not consume the plant they are not affected by the hormone disrupting property. But, if they are covered by the spray, even beneficial insects can be smothered. For this reason, it is best to use this spray in the early morning or in the evening when beneficial insects are less active.

Volunteer News

Certificate of Excellence

TripAdvisor has become the world's largest travel site by recognizing the power of traveler feedback. Just last week, Brooker Creek Preserve was recognized for earning exceptional traveler ratings over the past year! The Certificate of Excellence (which is currently displayed at the front desk) honors businesses that consistently earn top ratings from TripAdvisor travelers. With a rating of 4.5 out of 5, Brooker Creek Preserve has earned a place among the very best. This award, which is given only to the most exceptional performers in TripAdvisor's global business community, is a significant achievement deserving of recognition. The faculty and staff of Brooker Creek Preserve would like to congratulate and thank all of the volunteers on this outstanding achievement.



Opportunity

On Friday, August 24th from 9:00am - 4:00pm, Pinellas County Volunteer Services is hosting a free CPR/First Aid class for Brooker Creek Volunteers. This is a great opportunity and we hope all of you can attend. Spaces are limited. If you would like to reserve your spot in the class, please RSVP to Lara at lmiller@pinellascounty.org. This class will be held on site at the Preserve.

Quarterly Volunteer Meeting

It's that time again. Mark your calendars for Saturday, July 7th from 12:00p.m. (noon) - 2:00p.m. and plan on attending the quarterly volunteer meeting to be held in the classroom. Lunch will be provided by the Friends of Brooker Creek - THANK YOU! This is a great opportunity for all of the volunteers to meet face-to-face, catch-up, and get on the same page with everything that is going on at the Preserve. At the end of the meeting, there will be a special presentation and short hike on the "Anthropology of Brooker Creek" by one of our Bright Futures students. The faculty and staff of Brooker Creek Preserve look forward to seeing you there!

Keeping Up To Date

Lara Miller, Natural Resource Agent has started a Facebook and Twitter account to keep you up to date on programs, opportunities, and information related to Florida's natural resources. If you would like to be in the know, simply search for "Pinellas Natural Resources" on Facebook or "[Pinellas Ext NR](#)" on Twitter. Also, if you haven't already, Like us on Facebook at "Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center".

A New Addition to Our Team!

I'm so glad to be on the Brooker Team! My name is James Stevenson, most recently with the Pinellas Energy Efficiency Grant Project at Pinellas County Extension. I have now been given the wonderful task of developing natural history programs to provide to Pinellas residents both at the Education Center and as a Brooker Ambassador, giving programs and spreading the word about Brooker throughout the community. I have a Bachelor's degree in Plant Ecology from the University of the South in Sewanee, TN. My Masters is from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where I studied plant taxonomy. That led to an Assistant Curatorship of the University of Oxford Botanic Garden, where I spent 5 years re-classifying the living plant collections according to the most recent taxonomic system.

(Volunteer News continued)



James Stevenson

I grew up in Clearwater, and after 10 years living in England, I decided to come home and enjoy the sun! I look forward to meeting more of you. My hours are Thursdays and Fridays from 8-4 and an occasional Saturday.

BCP Environmental Education Center --Staying in the Loop

Don't forget to like us on facebook - [Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center](#)

Feel free to join [Timely Topics](#) and [Thinking Green](#) blogs written by various Pinellas County Extension agents on relative issues and topics related to our community

Have a question, but can't find the answer? Visit www.AskExtension.org or stop by the Education Center and drop your question into the "Ask an Agent" box.

**Brooker Creek Preserve
Environmental Education Center
Upcoming Events**
3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs.
(727) 453-6800
www.brookercreekpreserve.org

July 2012 Programs

July 5, 12, 19, 26

Book Time at Brooker. 10:30-11:15 am
Children ages 3 to 5 connect to the wonders of the natural world through a story and a craft, game or other hands-on activity. Free; advance registration required.

July 7, 21, 28

Brooker Creek Guided Hike. 9:00-10:30 am
See how the land has changed over time and the ecological footprints left by those changes. Closed-toe shoes, water and a hat recommended. Best for ages 6 and older. Free; advance registration required.

July 7, 10:00 - 11:00 am

Creatures of the Night. Awakened by a hooting owl, heard a coyote howling after dark or wake to find trash cans ravaged by a raccoon? There are many species that come out after dark. Learn about some of the most common critters visiting backyards. Free; advance registration required.

July 14, 8:00 - 10:30 am

Birds of Brooker Hike. Learn how to identify birds seen and heard at this special hike identifying common birds of Brooker Creek Preserve. Meander along this one-mile trail gathering information on the birds seen. Binoculars will be helpful. Bring water. 8 to 10:30 a.m.

July 14, 1:00 - 2:30 pm

Adult Ecology, Plant ID Series - The Story of Wetland Plants. Much can be learned about a wetland by the plants within it. This course provides the foundation in identifying wetland plants and how to use them to read the clues of a wetland. Through a brief presentation and

field trip, participants will learn to identify a number of obligate and wetland-associated plants and what their location tells about wetland hydrology. By learning to identify plants that belong and where they grow, participants will learn to decipher the story of a wetland.

July 14

Discovering Wildlife with Your Child. Who lives in that skin; what is the difference between a carnivore and an herbivore; whose tracks are those? Stop by the Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center's classroom anytime between 1 and 3 p.m. to participate in a variety of self-guided nature games and activities. A Brooker Creek Preserve volunteer will be available to answer your questions. Free; advance registration required.

July 23 to 27, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Herpetology Camp. A perfect opportunity for inquisitive children ages 7 to 11 to enjoy this five-day nature camp and explore the fascinating world of amphibians and reptiles side-by-side with professional herpetologist George Heinrich. Up close and personal encounters with animals such as gopher tortoises, frogs, lizards and snakes. \$150 per camper; advance registration a must since space is limited to 30 campers. Camp information (727) 865-6255.



July 28, 10:00 am - noon

Unveiling Our Urban Wildlife. A Sensing Nature guide will help the group to learn what wildlife lurks in our metropolitan jungle. Discover secret clues left by wildlife such as rabbits, rodents, coyotes, armadillos, snakes, raccoons and many others sharing our urban yards. Enjoy an "urban safari" by investigating wildlife signs in our urban habitats. After the indoor presentation participants will experience Florida's natural wonders on a nature walk. Free; advance registration required.

July 28, 1:00 - 2:30 pm

Adult Ecology, Plant ID Series - Identifying Grasses, Sedges and Rushes. Identifying grasses, sedges, and rushes, one of the most difficult groups of plants to identify, is presented in this lab and field trip. Through a brief presentation and field trip, participants will learn to identify the common grass, sedge, and rush genera. Basic botanical terms will be used to identify each genera discussed. The focus will be on distinguishing characteristics of a few common genera, rather than distinguishing between each species. Once participants are familiar with the general differences between the genera, they will be able to drill down to species with a good field guide. Free; advance registration required.

July 30 to August 3, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wildlife Ecology Camp. This five-day nature camp is a perfect opportunity for inquisitive children ages 7 to 11 to explore the ecology and conservation of Florida's wildlife and wild lands with George Heinrich, professional wildlife biologist and environmental educator. A blend of classroom and field sessions will include hands-on activities, guest presentations and exploration of the preserve's diverse habitats where campers will practice their nature detective skills. \$150 per camper; advance registration is a must since space limited to 30 campers.

August 2012 Programs

Aug. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Book Time at Brooker. 10:30 - 11:15 am

Children ages 3 to 5 connect to the wonders of the natural world through a story and a craft, game or other hands-on activity. Free; advance registration required.

Aug 4, 18, 25

Brooker Creek Guided Hike. 9:00 - 10:30 am

See how the land has changed over time and the ecological footprints left by those changes. Closed-toe shoes, water and hat recommended. Best for ages 6 and older. Free; advance registration required.

Aug. 4, 10:00 - noon

Discovering Tracks, Scats & Signs. A Sensing Nature guide will assist the group in learning about tracking wildlife and other nature clues that will unveil wildlife's presence. Apply the new knowledge during an easy hike to become acquainted with some of Florida's wildlife and their associated animal tracks, scats and signs. Free; advance registration required.

Aug. 11, 7:45 - 9:30 pm

Owl and Bat Prowl: A Sensing Nature guide will help the group in learning about creatures of the night before going out for an evening prowling. Investigate screech owl coos, bat clicks and other eerie evening sounds. Enjoy prowling the night with these winged warriors and even eavesdrop on bat conversations through technology. A not-to-be-missed experience. Free; advance registration required.

Aug. 11, 8:00 - 10:30 am

Birds of Brooker Hike: Learn how to identify the birds seen and heard at this special hike identifying common birds of Brooker Creek Preserve. Meander along this one-mile trail gathering information on the birds seen. Binoculars will be helpful. Bring water.

Aug. 11, 1:00 - 2:30 pm

Adult Ecology, Plant ID Series - Exotic Plants Identification: Wicked weeds infest our natural areas, competing with native species and

changing the landscape. This course will familiarize participants with invasive exotic species common to the area and resources available that can be used to help combat them. Presented by the chair of the Suncoast Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) which encompasses Hillsborough, Pinellas, Sarasota, and Manatee counties. The goal of this organization is to help unite citizens and land managers to work across boundaries to eliminate the impact of invasive species on our native environment. Free; advance registration required.

Aug. 18, 10:00 am - noon

Backyard Aliens: A Sensing Nature guide will help participants learn about some of the unwelcome, non-native invasive species that inhabit backyards. Learn which are here to stay and what we can do to help our true Florida natives. After the indoor presentation the group will enjoy a nature walk differentiating natives and exotics while discussing the importance of helping Florida's natural ecosystem. Free; advance registration required.

Aug. 25, 10 am - noon

Coexisting with Coyotes: Join this workshop led by a Sensing Nature guide to learn the latest information about these intelligent and adaptive nomads. How these wild adaptive animals, respectful and beneficial in their natural role, coexist with their neighbors will be a point of discussion. Discover what has and has not worked in other states and how to avoid creating backyard predator problems. Free; advance registration required.

Friends of Brooker Creek
3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs,
FL 34688. Please use this address on
any correspondence.

If you would like to join our active volunteer group at Brooker Creek Preserve, please call us at (727) 453-6800.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve - Mission Statement

The mission of the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve is to provide public support for the Preserve through fund raising, volunteer programs, and education to ensure that the Preserve remains a natural wilderness for future generations.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve - Land Use Position Statement

The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve support land uses within the boundaries of Brooker Creek Preserve which have a main purpose that furthers the preservation, conservation, restoration or protection of the land and resources of the Brooker Creek Preserve.

Current mission statement of the Parks Department - it is at least three years old and does not reflect the many changes in staffing and resources over that time. The newly formed Parks and Conservation Resources Department has not yet developed mission/vision statements.

The mission of the Pinellas County Park Department is to provide a continuing program of acquisition, development, maintenance, and protection of park areas for healthful outdoor activities.

Friends of Brooker Creek website:

www.FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org

To contact The Friends:

Email: fobcp@tampabay.rr.com

Phone: (727) 934-2680 (please leave a message and your phone number for a return call)

Brooker Creek Preserve:

Phone: (727) 453-6900

Website: www.brookercreekpreserve.org

The Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center is located at 3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs, Florida, 34688.

Phone: (727) 453-6800

Center Hours: Thurs. - Sat. 9 am - 4 pm

Preserve Hiking Trails open 7 days a week (except for day after Thanksgiving and Dec. 25), 7:00 am to sunset.

Horse Trails open 7 days a week, all year, sunrise to sunset.

Friends Trail is now open. The bridge is fixed and ready for hikers!

Friends of Brooker Creek Officers

Chair: Barbara Hoffman

Vice Chair: Cathie Foster

Vice Chair: Allyn Childress

Secretary: Chuck Parsons

Treasurer: Carson Morrow

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Wildflower Garden: Pam Brown

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This newsletter is published every other month. Please submit articles to Newsletter Editor Dr. Craig Huegel (727) 422-6583 or email Huegelc55@aol.com

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